

vote aye, opposed nay. Record, Mr. Clerk, please.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 2 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Debate has ceased. Senator Withem, to close, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President. First, I appreciate very much the body's discussion on this bill today, it's been a good one. We finally have had a good discussion on what 239CA is all about, and I'm very, very thankful for that. I did pass out to you comments, underlined some of them. Particularly because Senator Baack's name is being bandied about in this discussion, I thought it important that we get him involved one more time here. The question he asked of Regent Blank at the hearing, concerning the regent's position on strong coordination, we'll have a chance to discuss that in a few moments. But I wanted to draw that to your attention. Also, one of the members of the Higher Education Commission sent us this little chart here that I think graphically explains what is going on here in 239. This whole area of coordination of higher education is one that every year this Legislature talks about it, we never quite do it, we never quite get ahold of it. Last year we commissioned a study. I thought we were committing ourselves to deal with the issue, not necessarily to give a rubber stamp to the proposal, but to deal with the issue. I hope the discussion we've had today indicates that this Legislature, either with 239 or with Senator Warner's proposal that is coming up in the near future, or maybe with both, maybe put both of them on the ballot for the people to deal with, means that we're really going to get at the issue of coordination, because we've tried it in a piecemeal fashion in the past. We have, by the way, an excellent role and mission statute in the books, if anybody has ever bothered to read that. The problem is we tend to forget that. As a Legislature, busy dealing with multitudes of other issues, we tend to forget the fact that we have a role and mission statute. And we tend to legislate around that rather than following it. We established a program of program review. We've gone through five years of program review. We've had our Postsecondary Coordinating Commission reviewing the programs on all of our higher education level. The University of Nebraska has essentially ignored that process. A number of their programs have been flagged because they don't meet the standards that this Legislature set up, all but one of them voted to continue those programs, and not even monitor them. The other institutions monitor them, but they've